

Message Text

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44

ACTION INR-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 SS-20 NSC-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03 NIC-01

DRC-01 /092 W

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R 021025Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4963

INFO AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TA S: PFOR PINR UR FI

SUBJ: NEW SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO FINLAND

REF: HELSINKI 3107

1. EMBASSY FILES CONTAIN NO INFORMATION ON VLADIMIR SEVASTYANOVICH STEPANOV, WHOSE APPOINTMENT BY PRESIDUM OF SUPREME SOVIET WAS ANNOUNCED IN PRAVDA AND IZVESTIYA DECEMBER 27.

2. BY CHANCE, HOWEVER, EMBASSY OFFICER TRAVELING TO HELSINKI BY TRAIN IN EARLY OCTOBER HAPPENED TO SHARE TWO-MAN COMPARTMENT WITH STEPANOV AND HAD EXTENSIVE CONVERSATION WITH HIM. E WAS OWNING AT THAT TIME IN EUROPEAN SECTION OF FOREIGN MINISTRY'S POLICY PLANNING ADMINISTRATION. HE IS MARRIED (O BOFF WAS TREATED TO SOME OF HIS WIFE'S GRALICKLY MEATBALLS)* AND SPEAKS, AS FAR AS COULD BE DETERMINED, NO ENGLISH.

3. STEPANOV STRUCK EMBASSY AS PLEASANT*, INTELLIGENT, WELL-INFORMED (INCLUDING ABOUT U.S.), FORWARD-LOOKING MAN, RELATIVELY FREE OF IDEOLOGICAL CAST OF MIND. HE SPOKE AS STRONG, EVEN FERVENT SUPPORTER OF DETENTE AND IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH U.S. AND REFERRED TO SOVIET TRAVEL CONTROLS,

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FOR EXAMPLE, AS RELIC OF COLD WAR WHICH WOULD HAVE TO GO

SOONER OR LATER. AS ONE POINT STEPANOV POINTED OUT WINDOW AND ASSERTED THAT FINNISH FARMS WERE TOO SMALL TO BE EFFICIENT. WHEN EMBOFF ASKED WHETHER HE THOUGHT KOLKHOZES WOULD BE PREFERABLE, STEPANOV REPLIED BY NO MEANS, SINCE THEY WERE ALIEN TO FINNISH TRADITIONS AND WAY OF LIFE. ON SUBJECT OF STALIN, STEPANOV FELT THAT FORMER LEADER THAD FINALLY RECEIVED PROPER AND BALANCED TREATMENT IN USSR, WITH CREDIT FOR HIS MILITARY AND HEADERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS AND BLAME FOR HIS PERSONALITY EXCESSED AND CRUDLTIES. RESURGENCE OF STALINISM WAS NOT, HE FELT, A POSSIBILITY.

4. FROM EVERY INDICATION, AMBASSADOR STEPANOV OUGHT TO BE CONGENIAL AND WORTHWHILE CONTACT FOR EMBASSY HELSINKI.SOMMERLATTE

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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